

# WHITNEY

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# PRESS RELEASE



Charline Von Heyl, *Boogey*, 2004, acrylic, oil and charcoal on canvas, 82 x 78 in., Promised Gift of Thea Westreich Wagner and Ethan Wagner, Courtesy of the artist and Petzel, New York.

## **Whitney to Present *Collected by Thea Westreich Wagner and Ethan Wagner***

**NEW YORK, October 08, 2015** – Celebrating an extraordinary and transformative gift of more than 850 works collectively given to the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Centre Georges Pompidou by Thea Westreich Wagner and Ethan Wagner, both institutions will present consecutive exhibitions featuring a selection of works from the gift. The Whitney’s presentation of *Collected by Thea Westreich Wagner and Ethan Wagner* opens on November 20 in the Museum’s new downtown home and runs through March 6, 2016. The Pompidou’s exhibition follows the New York presentation, opening in Paris on June 9, 2016. The exhibition is organized by Elisabeth Sussman, curator and Sondra Gilman Curator of Photography, Whitney Museum of American Art, and Christine Macel, chief curator and head of the department of contemporary and prospective creation, Centre Pompidou, with Elisabeth Sherman, assistant curator, Whitney Museum of American Art. An illustrated catalogue documenting the collection will accompany the exhibitions.

Adam D. Weinberg, the Whitney’s Alice Pratt Brown Director, noted, “We are delighted to present this exhibition in honor of the magnanimous gift of art we received from Thea Westreich Wagner and Ethan Wagner—one of the largest in the Whitney’s history and a tremendous statement of support for the

Museum and its new building. Thea and Ethan are among the most astute collectors of late twentieth-century and early twenty-first-century art and their gift adds enormous strength to the Whitney's collection. We are deeply grateful to them and are pleased to be collaborating with our friends at the Pompidou."

This exhibition celebrates this remarkable gift as well as the perspicacious collecting of Westreich Wagner and Wagner by exploring several of the ideas and themes that recur in the collection across generations, mediums, and nationalities: the rise of mass media and the darker side of advertising; the adoption of street style and the punk aesthetic; the decorative arts and their ability to communicate often political messages; reflections on how technology has radically altered commerce, communication, and industry; and the artist as celebrity, among others.

Westreich Wagner and Wagner began collecting art in the 1980s and continue to collect today. They have consistently focused their attention on emerging artists, acquiring works soon after they were made, often straight out of the artists' studios. Many of these artists were relatively unknown at the time, but have since become some of the most heralded figures of their generation—notably Robert Gober, Jeff Koons, Richard Prince, Cindy Sherman, and Christopher Wool. The couple has also pursued a specific interest in photography, building deep holdings of the work of landmark figures such as Lee Friedlander and Robert Adams while also acquiring photographs by a diverse range of artists, including Liz Deschenes, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Annette Kelm, and Josephine Pryde. Continuously motivated by the learning challenges posed by new expressions and new ideas, the two have examined the world around them through the eyes of the artists whose work they follow and acquire; their collection is a unique, personal reflection on the "contemporary moment" as it has evolved over the last several decades.

The gift to the Whitney encompasses nearly five hundred and fifty works, representing a cross section of mediums, by more than seventy-five artists and collectives. In some cases artists will enter the collection for the first time and in others they add depth to our holdings of artists we have championed. The Pompidou is receiving more than three hundred works by some forty European artists. While the collection is divided between the two institutions, with works by American artists going to the Whitney and by non-American artists going to the Pompidou, the exhibitions draw from both gifts aiming to reveal the international dialogue intrinsic to contemporary art.

Ms. Westreich Wagner and Mr. Wagner noted, "We are thrilled that audiences will be able to experience these exhibitions at the Whitney and the Pompidou. These are works by artists whom we deeply admire and want to share with the world."

Among the artists in the Whitney exhibition are Robert Adams, Diane Arbus, Larry Clark, Tony Conrad, Dan Flavin, Lee Friedlander, Robert Gober, Jeff Koons, Zoe Leonard, Steven Parrino, Richard Prince, Cindy Sherman, Lawrence Weiner, Christopher Williams, and Christopher Wool. A considerable number of the works in the exhibition were produced by younger artists over the last two decades, including Anne Collier, Liz Deschenes, Gareth James, Jutta Koether, Sam Lewitt, Klara Liden, Lucy McKenzie, Philippe Parreno, Josephine Pryde, Eileen Quinlan, Reena Spaulings, Frances Stark, Simon Starling, Cheyney Thompson, and Danh Vo.

Among the works to be shown in the exhibition are: Robert Gober's *The Ascending Sink* (1985); Bernadette Corporation's *Creation of a False Feeling* (2000); Richard Prince's *Nancy to Her Girlfriend* (1988); Diane Arbus' *Puerto Rican woman with a beauty mark, N.Y.C.* (1965); Larry Clark's *42<sup>nd</sup> Street* (1979); Charline Von Heyl's *Boogey* (2004); Christopher Wool's *Incident on 9<sup>th</sup> Street* (1997); Jutta Koether's *Demonic Options (large format #1)* (2010); Matias Faldbakken's *Untitled (Locker Sculpture #01)* (2010); Philippe Parreno's *White Marquee* (2008); Philippe Parreno and Rirkrit Tiravanija's *Puppets* (2009);

Ken Okiishi's *(Goodbye to) Manhattan* (2010); Gilbert and George's *Up* (1980); David Robbins' *Talent* (1986); Danh Vo's *16:32:15, 26:05* (2009); Lucy McKenzie's *After G. Hobe, Salon Library for the Great Exhibition, 1902, Turin* (2006); Laura Owens' *Untitled* (1998); Liz Deschenes' *Green Screen #7* (2001); Sam Lewitt's *Weak Local Lineament (ICF 01)* (2013); Hito Steyerl's *Red Alert* (2007); Antoine Catala's *Image* (2012); and Cheyney Thompson's *Chronochrome 11* (2011).

Major support for *Collected by Thea Westreich Wagner and Ethan Wagner* is provided by the National Committee of the Whitney Museum of American Art.

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### **About the Whitney**

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists at a time when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for more than eighty years. The core of the Whitney's mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists themselves, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

### **Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art**

<i>Archibald Motley: Jazz Age Modernist</i>	Oct 2, 2015–Jan 17, 2016
<i>Jared Madere</i>	Oct 16, 2015–Jan 3, 2016
<i>New Theater: Selected Plays 2013–2015</i>	Oct 17–Oct 25, 2015
<i>Frank Stella: A Retrospective</i>	Oct 30, 2015–Feb 7, 2016
<i>Rachel Rose: Everything and More</i>	Oct 30, 2015–Feb 7, 2016
<i>Collected by Thea Westreich Wagner and Ethan Wagner</i>	Nov 20, 2015–Mar 6, 2016
<i>Laura Poitras</i>	Feb 5–May 15, 2016
<i>Sophia Al-Maria</i>	Summer 2016
<i>Stuart Davis: In Full Swing</i>	June 30–Oct 10, 2016
<i>Carmen Herrera</i>	Fall 2016
<i>David Wojnarowicz</i>	Fall 2016/Winter 2017
<i>Whitney Biennial</i>	Spring 2017

The Whitney Museum is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Museum hours are: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday from 10:30 am to 6 pm, Friday and Saturday from 10:30 am to 10 pm, closed Tuesday. General admission: \$22. Full-time students and visitors ages 19–25 and 62 & over: \$18. Visitors under 18 and Whitney members: FREE. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 7–10 p.m. For general information, please call (212) 570-3600 or visit [whitney.org](http://whitney.org).